

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 05165 151002Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-07 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13  
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7243  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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PASS ERDA

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: TECH, ENRG, IS  
SUBJECT: ISRAELI NUCLEAR POWER REQUIREMENTS

SUMMARY: JERUSALEM POST OF JULY 12 QUOTED ISRAELI ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION (IAEC) DIRECTOR UZI EILAM, AS SAYING THAT ISRAEL IS CAPABLE OF BUILDING ITS OWN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND SHOULD DO SO IF IT CANNOT BUY ONE ABROAD. EILAM SAID THAT ISRAEL IS ALREADY PLANNING FOR ALTERNATE GENERATING CAPACITY TO TIDE IT OVER UNTIL THE NUCLEAR PLANT IS READY. HOWEVER, AN IAEC OFFICER SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD THE EMBASSY'S SCIATT THAT EILAM'S STATEMENT REPRESENTS NO NEW THINKING BY GOI, WHICH IS NOT PLANNING TO BUILD ITS OWN REACTOR, AND THAT EILAM WAS SIMPLY ADDRESSING AN ENGINEERING CONFERENCE ABOUT ISRAEL'S CAPABILITY, WITHOUT REGARD TO GOI INTENT. EILAM'S REMARKS ABOUT PLANNING FOR ALTERNATE POWER CAPACITY DUE TO DELAY IN THE NUCLEAR OPTION IS INCONSISTENT WITH REMARKS MADE TO SCIATT BY THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING OF THE ISRAEL ELECTRICAL CORPORATION (IEC) WHO SAID GOI CONTINUES TO RELY ON NUCLEAR POWER (SUPPLIED BY US.). END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 05165 151002Z

1. IN A SPEECH TO THE 11TH CONFERENCE ON MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AT THE TECHNION UNIVERSITY, EILAM SAID, IN ADDITION TO REMARKS QUOTED ABOVE, THAT ISRAEL'S FIRST NUCLEAR POWER STATION IS DELAYED BECAUSE OF DELAY IN APPROVAL OF SITE AT NITZANIM AND BECAUSE "PRESIDENT FORD DID NOT SIGN THE AGREEMENT (U.S.-ISRAEL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT INITIALLED AUGUST 1976) DURING HIS TERM,

AND SIX MONTHS AFTER TAKING OFFICE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT SIGNED IT EITHER." HE SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF THE DELAY, IEC IS ALREADY PLANNING FOR ALTERNATE POWER CAPACITY.

2. IN CONTRAST TO THIS STATEMENT BY EILAM, IEC'S HEAD OF PLANNING, DR. MOSHE NELKEN, TOLD SCIATT ON JUNE 29 THAT THE CORPORATION IS STILL COUNTING BN NUCLEAR PLANTS TO SATISFY ISRAELI POWER REQUIREMENTS AND "IS NOT LOOKING SERIOUSLY AT ALTERNATIVES".

3. IN HIS SPEECH, EILAM SAID THAT BECAUSE OF DELAYS IN NUCLEAR POWER, THE SCHEDULE FOR START OF (NUCLEAR) OPERATION HAS BEEN PUSHED BACK FROM 1986 TO 1988. NELKEN DESCRIBED ISRAELI REQUIREMENTS AND PLANS AS FOLLOWS: PRESENT INSTALLED CAPACITY IS 2,186 MW. BY 1983, ISRAEL NEEDS 3,000 MW WHICH WILL BE OBTAINED FROM ADDITION OF FOUR 350 MW FOSSIL-FIRED GENERATORS, THE FIRST OF SHICH WILL GO ON-STREAM IN 1980 WITH TWO MORE BY 1982 AND THE FOURTH IN 1983. THESE WILL BE COAL-FIRED WITH PETROLEUM OR RESIDUAL FUEL OPTION.

REGARDING NUCLEAR POWER PLANS, NELKEN SAID THAT THE COMPANY COULD GET BY IN 1985 WITH PEAKING POWER GENERATORS BUT IT MUST HAVE BY 1986 AT LEAST ONE OF THE PLANNED 960 MW NUCLEAR PLANTS OPERATING. HE QUALIFIED HIS REMARKS BY SAYING THAT HE WAS RECITING "TODAY'S THINKING". NELKEN AVOIDED RESPONSE TO SEVERAL QUERIES ABOUT LEAD TIME REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION OF 960 MW NUCLEAR POWER PLANT. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH GOI IS "SPENDING MILLIONS OF

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 05165 151002Z

US DOLLARS IN MANHOURS ON THE NUCLEAR PROJECT, MOST OF THIS EFFORT WOULD NOT BE WASTED (IN ANY EVENT) BECAUSE IT IS STIE-ORIENTED."

4. ORDINARILY, EMBASSY WOULD INCLINE TO GIVE MORE CREDIBILITY TO IEC THAN TO IAEC WHEN THE TWO MAKE INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJCT. HOWEVER, THESE ARE NOT ORDINARY TIMES HERE DUE TO CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT COUPLED WITH SUBSTANTIAL REORGANIZATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELD OF POWER. THE NEW MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE HAS NOT HAD TIME TO DEFINE ITS RELATIONSHIP TO IAEC, THE NEW NATIONAL ENERGY AUTHORITY (SEE TEL AVIV A-91, MAY 2, 1977) AND IEC, NOR HAS THE NEW MINISTER, YITZHAK MODAI, HAD TIME TO MAKE MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS.

5. IMPATIENCE WITH USG DELAYS IN CONSIDERATION OF BILATERAL, IMPLICIT IN REMARKS OF EILAM, IS NOT SHARED BY OTHER ISRAELI OFFICIALS. NELKEN SEEMED TO ACCEPT NEED FOR USG TO AWAIT CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF NEW US NON-PROLIFERATION POLICIES, AS DID FONMIN LEGAL ADVISER MEIR ROSENNE, IN CONVERSATION WITH SCIATT JULY 13.

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## Message Attributes

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